

Temperature

General Information:

Your glass thermometer is filled with alcohol or kerosene (usually dyed red) rather than mercury, which can be highly toxic to the environment if the thermometer breaks. The thermometer is just as accurate as a mercury thermometer but is more sensitive to temperature changes. ***IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO TAKE YOUR TEMPERATURE READING IMMEDIATELY.***

How to Collect an Accurate Temperature Reading:

- Immerse the thermometer in the water for at least 60 seconds in the same area of your sample collection.
- If you are collecting a tow 3 feet below the water's surface, make sure you are consistent and get the temperature there as well.
- *Do not take a temperature reading from your plankton sample!*
- Once you remove the thermometer from the water, the temperature will begin to change as soon as it is collected, so you will need to read the temperature promptly.
- Hold the thermometer by the top (not the base) and bring the thermometer to eye level. This will give you the most accurate reading possible. If you leave the thermometer in the water and try to read, you could get a parallax error (the scale will appear different at an angle).
- Try to get a reading to the nearest 0.5 degree.
- After you have recorded the temperature reading in Celsius, rinse the thermometer with fresh water.



To find out more information about Mercury issues and activities for your class, go to:
www.mercuryinschools.uwex.edu/curriculum/national-curriculum.htm